

Balearica, has its origin in a singular error, and that the proper name of this Crane is *Balearica chrysopelargus*. Cranes, as is well known, are apt subjects for semidomestication. All the sixteen species recognized by Mr. Tegetmeier may be seen represented in the Zoological Gardens of London and the continent, except the newly discovered *Grus nigricollis*. Of this fine bird, met with by the great traveller Prejevalsky on the banks of the Koko-nor, a welcome figure is given, copied from the Russian original.

. XXXIX.—*Letters, Announcements, &c.*

We have received the following letters addressed to the Editors of 'The Ibis':—

Northrepps, April 20th, 1881.

SIRS,—I shall be glad if you can find a corner in 'The Ibis' to record the occurrence on the coast of Holland of a magnificent Red-breasted Goose, *Bernicla ruficollis*, on the 18th of February. It was shot, when in company with a lot of Bernicle Geese, by Messrs. W. B. Monement and George Cresswell. The gunners shot at them in the evening from their "punts." They got the Geese between themselves and the daylight; "but when within shot," writes Mr. Monement in answer to my inquiries for particulars, "we found them in a long line and thin, so let them swim on in order to rake them; but they would not have it, and rose. We stopped twenty-five Bernicle; got twenty-three, and the Red-breasted Goose."

The Red-breasted Goose, together with one or two Bernicles and Gadwalls, was sent over to a bird-stuffer in Norfolk (Dack, of Holt), who has set this great rarity up very nicely, considering it was very "high" when he received it. The triangle on the cheek is slightly mixed with white; with that exception, it is in the most perfect plumage.

Yours, &c.,

J. H. GURNEY, Jun.

Aldershot, June 10th, 1881.

SIRS,—The museum of the late Marquis of Tweeddale has contained for many years an example of a *Pitta* of the subgenus *Hydrornis*, which appears to be worthy of specific distinction. The locality given on the label in the late Marquis's handwriting is "Saigon, Cochin China;" but M. Oustalet, who kindly responded to a letter I wrote him on the subject of this bird, expresses himself as very doubtful of the accuracy of the locality thus assigned to it, and is of opinion that it is more likely to have come from the mountainous region of the Malay peninsula.

However, be this as it may, there seems to be no doubt that the bird in question was obtained in some part of South-east Asia; and the mere fact of a species of this subgenus occurring in those countries would of itself be interesting.

This specimen may possibly prove to be an immature *H. nipalensis*, from which it chiefly differs in being slightly smaller and more slender in the tarsi; the head above is strongly tinged with bluish green, which shades into dull blue on a fairly well-defined nuchal patch. Another characteristic of this bird, which is absent in the two known species, is that many of the dorsal feathers are of a blue colour, as though the bird had been in process of changing the colour of its plumage at the time of its death. The under surface is also very much paler than in any of my examples of *H. nipalensis*, Hodgs., or *H. oatesi*, Hume. I propose for this species the title of *Pitta (Hydrornis) soror*.

Yours &c.,

R. G. WARDLAW-RAMSAY.

News of Consul Layard.—Our excellent correspondent, Consul Layard, writes from Noumea on April 2nd that he is collecting his notes for a general paper on the birds of New Caledonia, where he has now recognized 136 species. "It has been in hand some time; but I have delayed it in hopes of visiting the north of the island and great central mountain-chain. I want to know personally what they contain,

In August next I shall certainly do the latter; but I fear the former is beyond me, our means of communication are so bad. I have notices of two Ducks that, as yet, I have not seen."

Mr. Layard hopes, we are glad to add, to be able to pay us a visit in England in the course of the summer of 1882.

Proceedings of Travellers and Collectors.—Mr. E. W. White, of Buenos Ayres, who has recently returned from a trip through the upper provinces of the Argentine Republic, is now preparing an excursion into Corrientes and the territory of Misiones, and intends to pay special attention to the birds. His agent in this country is Mr. E. Gerrard, Jun.

The last letter received in Warsaw from Mr. Stolzmann is dated from Yurimaguas, in Eastern Peru, on the 9th of January last. Mr. Stolzmann was preparing to return direct to Europe, with all his collections, which are said to be very extensive and will doubtless contain many novelties.

Dr. Finsch, on the 18th of January last, was still at Matupi, in New Britain. He had obtained a fine lot of birds (nothing new up to that date), and was expecting to send off sixty boxes of these and other objects by the bark "Goethe," which would sail for Europe in about a month from that date.

Mr. Charles B. Cory, writing from Boston in April last, tells us that he had just returned from a very interesting trip to the mountains of Hayti and San Domingo. He had succeeded in procuring about 600 birdskins, amongst which were examples of at least four new species, one apparently belonging to a new genus.

Mr. Gould's Works and Collections.—The entire stock of the late Mr. Gould's illustrated ornithological works, as also of the 'Mammals of Australia,' with all the copyright and other interests involved in them, has been purchased from the executors by Messrs. Henry Sotheran & Co. of Piccadilly,

who, we believe, are taking steps to complete the unfinished portions. Mr. Gould's famous collection of Humming-birds, together with his extensive collection of unmounted birdskins, has, as already stated in our last issue, been purchased by the Trustees of the British Museum for £3000; and the Humming-birds are already exhibited in the bird-galleries of the Museum. At present the specimens are not labelled; but we are informed that the names will shortly be placed upon them, and a 'Guide' to the collection issued.

Value of Ornithological Books.—It will be interesting to some of our readers to learn the prices that some of the more important ornithological works realized at the recent sale of Mr. Gould's Library. Complete set of 'The Ibis,' £50; Hewitson's 'British Oology,' £6 6s.; Buller's 'Birds of New Zealand,' £20; Jerdon's 'Illustrations of Indian Ornithology' (large-paper copy), £7 17s. 6d.; Legge's 'Birds of Ceylon,' £5 17s. 6d.; Marshall's 'Capitonidæ,' £9 15s.; Rowley's 'Ornithological Miscellany,' £11; Dresser's 'Birds of Europe,' £43; Sharpe's 'Monograph of the Alcedinidæ,' £9 5s.; Gray and Michell's 'Genera of Birds,' £29 10s.; Knip's 'Pigeons,' £6 15s.; Levaillant's 'Oiseaux d'Afrique,' £16 5s.; Malherbe's 'Monograph of the Picidæ,' £24 10s.

The 'Birds of New Zealand.'—We are pleased to learn that Dr. Buller has in preparation a new and enlarged edition of his 'Birds of New Zealand,' in which it is proposed to give a separate coloured illustration of every species, with botanical accessories characteristic of the country. It is Dr. Buller's intention to come to England in order to superintend himself the publication of this work. That there is a demand for another edition may be safely inferred from the fact that, although nearly three hundred copies were subscribed for in New Zealand alone, a single copy of the book has fetched as much as £20, at public auction, in the colony! Where the popular love of science finds so tangible an expression, an author has little else to desire in the way of encouragement. In the meantime the local demand will be

appeased by the publication of a manual of New-Zealand ornithology (under the auspices of the Geological-Survey Department), the materials for which will be drawn from Dr. Buller's present work, the plates being reduced for that purpose by a process of photolithography. We have seen a specimen plate, and can speak of it as being highly creditable to colonial art.

The Birds of the British Museum.—We extract the sub-joined Report on the additions to the collection of birds in the British Museum during the past financial year from the Report of the Trustees just presented to Parliament.

The total number of acquisitions amounts to 2500, including eggs. One hundred and ten species were entirely new to the collection. The following accessions may be specially mentioned :—

A series of British birds, with their nests, eggs, and young ; presented by Lord Walsingham.

A specimen of Leach's Petrel, caught in the neighbourhood of Woolwich ; presented by Mr. Henry Whitely.

A specimen of a rare Faroe-Island Wren (*Anorthura borealis*) ; presented by Edward Hargitt, Esq.

Two nests and four eggs of the Flamingo (*Phænicopterus antiquorum*) from the marshes of the Guadalquivir river ; presented by Lord Lilford.

Forty Warblers from Southern Spain and Morocco ; presented by Lieut.-Col. Irby.

Sixty-nine birds from the Zambesi country, collected by Dr. Bradshaw, and containing several rare and interesting species ; purchased.

Two of the typical specimens of *Cypselus balstoni* and *Zapornia watersi* ; purchased.

Fifty-four skins of Bulbuls, containing eleven species new to the collection ; purchased.

The types of *Otocorys elwesi* and *Montifringilla ruficollis* from Sikkim, and thirteen birds from Sind, among which are three species before unrepresented in the collection ; presented by W. T. Blanford, Esq., F.R.S.

Two hundred and one birds from Travancore, collected by Mr. F. W. Bourdillon, and containing the type of *Merula bourdilloni* and many rare species; purchased.

Twelve specimens from Sumatra, collected by Dr. Carl Bock, and containing four species new to the collection.

Three hundred and eighteen eggs from North-western Borneo, collected by Mr. Hugh Low during his sojourn in Labuan. This collection has been described by Mr. Sharpe (P. Z. S. 1879, p. 317).

Twelve birds from Duke-of-York Island, New Britain, &c., collected by Mr. Layard, and representing nine species new to the collection; purchased.

Forty-two specimens from the Goldie river and the country inland of Port Moresby, South-eastern New Guinea, including many rare species new to the collection, among them the type of *Geocichla papuensis*; purchased.

Forty-two birds from South-eastern New Guinea, collected by Charles Hunstein, and containing, among other rarities, the types of *Clytoceyx rex* (a new genus and species of Kingfishers) and of *Tanyptera danæ*; purchased.

Two Cassowaries from South-eastern New Guinea, apparently referable to *Casuarus kaupi* and *C. beccarii*; purchased.

Three specimens of the Australian Cassowary (*Casuarus australis*) from Northern Australia; presented by Messrs. F. DuCane Godman and O. Salvin.

A series of twenty-three Cormorants from New Zealand; presented by Baron A. von Hügel.

Six birds from the Solomon Isles, collected by Lieut. Richards, and comprising the types of *Edoliosoma solomonis*, *Graucalus monotonus*, and *Rhipidura russata*; purchased.

Six species of North-American Wrens; presented by the Smithsonian Institution.

Twenty-four birds from California; purchased.

Seventy-nine birds and eggs from Chili and the Straits of Magellan; collected during the cruise of H.M.S. 'Alert.'